

Message Text

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44

ACTION SS-25

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R 201123 Z JUN 73

FM AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4648
INFO AMEMBASSY SAIGON
AMEMBASSY BANGKOK
USDEL JEC PARIS

C O N F I D E N T I A L VIENTIANE 4506

EXDIS

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PGOV, PINT, MOPS, PFOR, LA

SUBJECT: SOUVANNA ON CURRENT RLG- LPF NEGOTIATIONS

1. DURING MY CALL ON SOUVANNA JUNE 20 RE RICE SHORTAGE IN LAOS CAUSED BY THAI GOVERNMENT'S EMBARGO ON RICE EXPORTS (SEPTTEL/ NOTAL), I ASKED PRIME MINISTER ABOUT STATUS OF RLG- LPF NEGOTIATIONS. SOUVANNA SAID PHENG IS REPORTING TO HIM DAILY AND IT IS HIS UNDERSTANDING THAT PHENG NA DPHOUMI ARE PROCEEDING METHODICALLY IN DISCUSSING AND DRAFTING THE POLITICAL- MILITARY PROTOCOL IMPLEMENTING FEBRUARY VIENTIANE AGREEMENT. ACCORDING TO SOUVANNA, THE TWO NEGOTIATORS AGREED ON SEVERAL POINTS AND HAVE IDENTIFIED A NUMBER OF ISSUES ON WHICH THE TWO SIDES HOLD DIVERGENT VIEWS. THESE ISSUES WILL THEN BE SUBMITTED TO SOUVANNA TO DETERMINE WHETHER RLG WISHES TO MAKE CONCESSION OR WHETHER SOUVANNA WILL INSIST THAT PHOUMI CABLE SAM NEUA FOR NEW INSTRUCTIONS.

2. I ASKED SOUVANNA WHETHER HE THOUGHT THE TWO NEGOTIATORS WOULD MEET THE JULY 1 DEADLINE HE HAD SET FOR THE NEGOTIATIONS (VIENTIANE 4396). SOUVANNA REPLIED THAT HE " REMAINED OPTIMISTIC THAT THIS DEADLINE CAN BE MET ALTHOUGH IT WILL REQUIRE COMPROMISES."

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3. I THEN WENT OVER THE SAME THREE POINTS I HAD DISCUSSED WITH PHENG PHONGSAVAN (VIENTIANE 4473, 4478 ADN 4460) WHICH I CONSIDERE TO BE OF DIRECT CONCERN TO THE UNITED STATES, I. E. NO PERJORATIVE REFERENCE TO THE USG IN THE PROTOCOL, INCLUSION OF PROVISION OF THE SEARCH FOR MIA' S IN LAOS, AND CLARIFYING LANGUAGE ON THE ONTRODUCION OF WAR MATERIAL INTO LAOS. I PARTICULARLY STRESSED THE IMPORTANCE OF SOME PROVISION ON MIA' S, WHICH I EXPLAINED HAD BECOME A POLITICAL ISSUE IN AMERICA. SOUVANNA TOOK NOTE OF THESE POINTS WITHOUT COMMENT.

4. COMMENT: I DO NOT KNOW BASIS FOR PRIME MINISTER' S OPTIMISM THAT PHENG AND PHOUMI WILL MEET THE SELF-IMPOSED DEADLINE OF JULY 1. I FEAT THAT SOUVANNA WILL BE DISPOSED TO ACCEDE TO SOME KEY LPF DEMANDS, AS HE DID BACK IN FEBRUARY, IN ORDER TO GET AN AGREEMENT ON PAPER WITH LPF. SINCE SOUVANNA IS DETERMINED TO BRING THE PRESENT NEGOTIATIONS TO FRUITION, HE MAY BE WILLING TO SETTLE FOR A LESS THAN SATISFACTORY DOCUMENT WITH THE HOPE THAT AFTERWARDS WAYS WILL BE FOUND TO GET AROUND THE LESS DESIRABLE ASPECTS OF THE AGREEMENT.
DEAN

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*** Current Handling Restrictions *** EXDIS

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